

SOCIAL WORK LICENSING PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. What is a key competency of a medical social worker in a hospital setting?**
 - A. Providing long-term therapy for chronic conditions
 - B. Developing discharge plans and linking resources
 - C. Managing staff and clinical teams
 - D. Conducting research on medical ethics
- 2. What is the defining duration for symptoms of ADHD?**
 - A. At least 1 month
 - B. More than 3 months
 - C. More than 6 months
 - D. At least 2 weeks
- 3. In the context of social work, which of the following is considered a common distractor?**
 - A. Clearly stated facts
 - B. Appealing but incorrect answers
 - C. Complex scenarios
 - D. Vague statements
- 4. What is a primary concern when discussing confidential client information over email?**
 - A. Emails are always deleted after being read.
 - B. Emails can be intercepted and are often unencrypted.
 - C. Email responses are always expected in professional settings.
 - D. The content of the email is less important than the format.
- 5. Which term best describes behavior causing an individual discomfort, according to Ego psychology?**
 - A. Ego Dystonic
 - B. Ego Syntonic
 - C. Psychotic
 - D. Dissociative

- 6. In the context of Bipolar I disorder, a major depressive episode must last for a minimum of how many weeks?**
- A. 1 week
 - B. 2 weeks
 - C. 1 month
 - D. 2 months
- 7. Which of the following symptoms is typical in someone experiencing schizophrenia?**
- A. Consistent positive mood
 - B. Delusions and hallucinations
 - C. Excessive energy and motivation
 - D. Social withdrawal without symptoms
- 8. In supervision, what is transference and countertransference?**
- A. The supervisor's feelings about the agency
 - B. The emotional reactions between supervisor and supervisee
 - C. The use of performance metrics in evaluation
 - D. The supervisor's interest in the supervisee's personal development
- 9. What are the three areas to identify with each question in the social work exam?**
- A. Problem, Person, Last Sentence
 - B. Person, Purpose, Resolution
 - C. Problem, Purpose, Last Sentence
 - D. Person, Problem, Life Cycle
- 10. Bipolar II disorder requires the presence of which episodes?**
- A. Mild depressive episode and a manic episode
 - B. Hypomanic episode and major depressive episode
 - C. Only a major depressive episode
 - D. Only a manic episode

Answers

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1. B
2. C
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What is a key competency of a medical social worker in a hospital setting?

- A. Providing long-term therapy for chronic conditions
- B. Developing discharge plans and linking resources**
- C. Managing staff and clinical teams
- D. Conducting research on medical ethics

A key competency of a medical social worker in a hospital setting involves developing discharge plans and linking resources. This function is crucial because medical social workers play a vital role in ensuring that patients transition safely from the hospital to their homes or other care facilities. In a hospital, social workers assess the social, emotional, and financial factors that might affect a patient's recovery and well-being. By creating comprehensive discharge plans, they identify the necessary resources and support systems that will facilitate the patient's ongoing care. This includes coordinating with healthcare providers, community organizations, and families to ensure that patients have access to follow-up services, rehabilitation, or home health care as needed. The ability to link patients to appropriate resources after discharge is essential in promoting continuity of care, preventing readmissions, and improving overall health outcomes. This competency is particularly important in a medical setting where the dynamics of patient care and safety are continually evolving.

2. What is the defining duration for symptoms of ADHD?

- A. At least 1 month
- B. More than 3 months
- C. More than 6 months**
- D. At least 2 weeks

The defining duration for symptoms of ADHD is established as more than 6 months. This timeframe is crucial because it ensures that the symptoms are not just transient or situational, which can be common in children's behaviors during various developmental stages. ADHD is characterized by persistent patterns of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that interfere with functioning or development. A duration of more than 6 months allows clinicians to assess the chronicity of these symptoms, distinguishing ADHD from other conditions that may present with similar behaviors but do not meet the threshold of persistence. This timeframe aligns with diagnostic criteria used in established manuals such as the DSM-5, which emphasizes the importance of symptoms being present across multiple settings—such as home and school—and having a notable impact on daily functioning. The other options reflect durations that are typically too short to establish a reliable diagnosis for ADHD, as they may not capture the enduring nature of the disorder.

3. In the context of social work, which of the following is considered a common distractor?

- A. Clearly stated facts
- B. Appealing but incorrect answers**
- C. Complex scenarios
- D. Vague statements

A common distractor in a multiple-choice format, especially in the field of social work, refers to an answer that may seem attractive or persuasive but ultimately leads the test-taker away from the correct response. "Appealing but incorrect answers" fits this definition perfectly, as such options can be misleading by presenting information that has some degree of accuracy or may resonate with the test-taker's previous knowledge or biases. These distractors are designed to challenge the test-taker's understanding and require careful consideration of the material. In social work, where ethical decisions and critical thinking are essential, recognizing and avoiding these appealing yet incorrect options can significantly impact a practitioner's effectiveness. Therefore, it's crucial to differentiate between superficial allure and factual correctness to arrive at sound conclusions. While options like "clearly stated facts," "complex scenarios," and "vague statements" could also appear on an exam, they do not serve the same purpose as appealing but incorrect answers. Clearly stated facts are simply accurate information, complex scenarios can be tools for testing reasoning and application of knowledge, and vague statements often lack the detail required for analysis. The focus here is specifically on the qualities that make distractors effective, which is captured well by the concept of appealing but incorrect responses.

4. What is a primary concern when discussing confidential client information over email?

- A. Emails are always deleted after being read.
- B. Emails can be intercepted and are often unencrypted.**
- C. Email responses are always expected in professional settings.
- D. The content of the email is less important than the format.

When discussing confidential client information over email, the primary concern is that emails can be intercepted and are often unencrypted. This means that sensitive information can be exposed to unauthorized individuals who may access the email during transmission or if they gain access to an email account. In many cases, standard email protocols do not encrypt the data, making it vulnerable to hacking, phishing attacks, or other forms of unauthorized access. Social workers have an ethical and legal obligation to protect client confidentiality, and using unsecured email poses a significant risk to that confidentiality. Understanding the risks associated with email communications is crucial in social work practice. It guides professionals in adopting safer communication methods, such as using secure messaging platforms that provide encryption or discussing sensitive matters in person or over secure phone lines.

5. Which term best describes behavior causing an individual discomfort, according to Ego psychology?

- A. Ego Dystonic**
- B. Ego Syntonic
- C. Psychotic
- D. Dissociative

The term that best describes behavior causing an individual discomfort, according to Ego psychology, is ego dystonic. This concept refers to thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that are in conflict with an individual's self-perception or personal values. When a person experiences ego dystonic behavior, they often find it distressing or uncomfortable because it does not align with their sense of self and can lead to feelings of anxiety or shame. Ego syntonic, on the other hand, refers to thoughts and behaviors that are consistent with one's self-image or values, resulting in a sense of harmony and comfort. Therefore, it does not contribute to any discomfort. The other terms, psychotic and dissociative, pertain to different psychological disorders and states. Psychotic behavior is typically characterized by a disconnection from reality, while dissociative behavior involves a disconnection from thoughts, identity, consciousness, or memory. These concepts do not specifically address the discomfort associated with internal conflict experienced in ego dystonic behavior.

6. In the context of Bipolar I disorder, a major depressive episode must last for a minimum of how many weeks?

- A. 1 week
- B. 2 weeks**
- C. 1 month
- D. 2 months

In the context of Bipolar I disorder, the criteria for diagnosing a major depressive episode require that the episode must last for a minimum duration of two weeks. This duration is part of the standard diagnostic guidelines outlined in the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition). A major depressive episode is characterized by a sustained period of a depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, alongside other symptoms such as significant weight loss, insomnia or hypersomnia, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness, or difficulty concentrating. The two-week duration is critical because it helps differentiate between a temporary mood change and a more serious depressive episode that warrants clinical attention. This benchmark ensures that the depressive symptoms are sufficiently moderate to severe and disruptive to daily functioning, which is essential for a proper diagnosis and subsequent treatment. Thus, recognizing that a major depressive episode in Bipolar I disorder must last for two weeks is key to understanding the clinical presentation and the nuances of mood disorders.

7. Which of the following symptoms is typical in someone experiencing schizophrenia?

- A. Consistent positive mood
- B. Delusions and hallucinations**
- C. Excessive energy and motivation
- D. Social withdrawal without symptoms

The presence of delusions and hallucinations is indeed a hallmark symptom of schizophrenia. Delusions refer to strong beliefs that are not based in reality; for instance, an individual might believe they are being persecuted or have special powers. Hallucinations involve experiencing sensations that are not present, such as hearing voices or seeing things that others do not see. These symptoms significantly impact a person's ability to function and often lead to distress or impaired social interactions. In the context of schizophrenia, these symptoms are fundamental, aligning with the diagnostic criteria for the disorder. The presence of delusions and hallucinations can disrupt an individual's perception of reality, making it challenging for them to engage in typical daily activities or maintain relationships. The other options do not align with the symptoms commonly observed in schizophrenia. For example, a consistent positive mood is generally not characteristic of this disorder, as individuals with schizophrenia often experience a range of mood disturbances. Excessive energy and motivation is more associated with conditions such as mania than schizophrenia. Lastly, social withdrawal alone, without the presence of other symptoms, is not specific enough to indicate schizophrenia, as many individuals may withdraw for various reasons that do not involve psychosis or other symptoms associated with the disorder.

8. In supervision, what is transference and countertransference?

- A. The supervisor's feelings about the agency
- B. The emotional reactions between supervisor and supervisee**
- C. The use of performance metrics in evaluation
- D. The supervisor's interest in the supervisee's personal development

Transference and countertransference refer to the emotional dynamics that occur in the supervisory relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee. Transference often involves the supervisee projecting feelings, expectations, or past experiences onto the supervisor, which can affect how they interact and engage with each other. This may stem from the supervisee's previous relationships or experiences, particularly those that are emotionally significant. Countertransference, on the other hand, is the supervisor's emotional responses to the supervisee. These responses may be influenced by the supervisor's own background, feelings, or personal experiences, which can impact their ability to objectively guide and support the supervisee. Recognizing and managing these emotional reactions is essential for effective supervision, as it allows for deeper understanding and more productive interactions. The response about the agency's feelings, performance metrics, or general interest in the supervisee's development does not capture the essence of transference and countertransference. These aspects are crucial not only in understanding the supervisory relationship but also in fostering professional growth and addressing challenges within that dynamic.

9. What are the three areas to identify with each question in the social work exam?

- A. Problem, Person, Last Sentence**
- B. Person, Purpose, Resolution
- C. Problem, Purpose, Last Sentence
- D. Person, Problem, Life Cycle

The correct answer emphasizes the three critical areas to identify with each question on the social work licensing exam: problem, person, and last sentence. Understanding the "problem" involves grasping the main issue presented in the scenario. This helps candidates focus on the central challenge they need to address, which is crucial for social work practice. Identifying the "person" refers to recognizing the individual or group involved in the case. This is essential, as social work is inherently client-centered, and understanding who is affected by the problem allows for more tailored and effective interventions. Lastly, the "last sentence" often serves as a clue or summary that highlights what is being asked or required from the candidate in the scenario. It helps candidates concentrate on specific actions or considerations needed to resolve the issue. This approach assists in breaking down complex scenarios into manageable parts, which can facilitate better comprehension and enable candidates to apply their knowledge effectively during the exam.

10. Bipolar II disorder requires the presence of which episodes?

- A. Mild depressive episode and a manic episode
- B. Hypomanic episode and major depressive episode**
- C. Only a major depressive episode
- D. Only a manic episode

Bipolar II disorder is characterized by the presence of at least one hypomanic episode and one major depressive episode. A hypomanic episode is a less severe form of mania that includes elevated mood, increased energy, and often enhanced productivity, but does not reach the severity required for a manic episode. The major depressive episode includes symptoms such as persistent sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in most activities, and other significant impairments in everyday functioning. This combination of episodes is crucial for accurately diagnosing Bipolar II disorder, as it distinguishes it from other mood disorders. The definition of Bipolar II emphasizes the presence of both episodes, as the hypomanic episodes are essential for differentiating it from unipolar depressive disorders and from Bipolar I disorder, which requires at least one full manic episode. Thus, the requirement of both a hypomanic episode and a major depressive episode is what solidifies the diagnosis of Bipolar II disorder.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://socialworklicensing.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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